



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OFFICE FOR CIVIL RIGHTS

THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY

September 23, 2015

Mr. Peter Kirsanow, Commissioner
United States Commission on Civil Rights
1331 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Suite 1150
Washington, DC 20425

Dear Mr. Kirsanow:

Thank you for your August 31, 2015, letter to Secretary Duncan regarding the Department of Education's *#RethinkDiscipline Public Awareness Campaign* (Campaign). As you know, the Campaign seeks to advance the national conversation about reducing the overuse of unnecessary out of school suspensions and expulsions and replacing these practices with positive alternatives that keep students in school and engaged in learning. In your letter you raised concerns regarding the Campaign and a Dear Colleague letter jointly issued by the U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Justice on January 8, 2014 (the Guidance) related to school discipline and disparate impact. The Secretary has asked me to respond on his behalf.

As our March 5, 2014, response to your February 18, 2014, letter indicated, we do not share your concerns, as both the Guidance and Campaign are fully consistent with the law. Although we continue to recognize your perspective on the challenges and complexities concerning this issue, we also know that schools can create positive school climates and implement effective discipline practices.

Thank you again for sharing your viewpoint on this important topic.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "CEL", is positioned above the word "Sincerely,".

Sincerely,

Catherine E. Lhamon
Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
U.S. Department of Education

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